

Warning Signs for Potential Suicide

- previous attempts (single biggest indicator of a completed suicide to come)
- giving clues (90% of kids who suicide give many clues)
- make poor choices about safety (no seat belts, no condoms)
- hospitalized (especially for consequence of living dangerously, for depression or other mental health issues)
- long-term depression
- pre-occupation with death
- listening to depressive or violent music
- writes of these themes
- self-mutilation
- frequent crying spells
- withdrawn behaviors
- change in peer group
- rebellious
- increase in acting out behaviors
- loss of interest in usual activities
- talk about death
- may have experienced many losses within a short time
- hopeless/powerless/out of control language
- recent suicide of another
- increased physical symptoms
- giving away belongings
- no hope for future, no plans
- fatigue – loss of energy
- blames self for parents' divorce, a death, some event
- loss of hygiene, tidiness, organization
- changes in long-established patterns
 - they may be hoping someone will notice
 - may be having difficulty in concentration, thinking
- changes in eating, sleeping patterns
- sudden cheerfulness or peacefulness after long depression
 - decision may have been made
 - child has a new sense of power and control
- sudden focus on everyone but themselves
 - may be an attempt to distract attention away from themselves
- setbacks after slow or extended recovery
- radical change in personality
- talking about funerals, death
- trouble concentrating
- closure of friendships, relationships
- move into a "more troubled" peer group
- increased drug / alcohol abuse (self-medicating against the pain)
- promiscuity
- increased risk-taking
- suicidal attempts

Often these kids feel both exceptional and isolated.

Messages they may give to others:

"I can't go on."

"I hate my life."

"I'm tired."

"I'm bored."

"You'll regret it when I'm gone."

"I have to do this on my own."

"You won't be seeing me around anymore."

"I'm going to kill myself."

"I wish I could just go to sleep and never wake up."

"I feel like I could just kill myself."

